



Washington State Senator
35th Legislative District

Senator Tim Sheldon

2006 Legislative Report

Spring 2006

How to contact me

I appreciate your letters, calls and e-mails on legislative issues. Please let me know if I can help on matters before state agencies.

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Committees:

- International Trade & Economic Development (Vice Chair)
- Agriculture & Rural Economic Development
- Transportation

Dear Neighbors,

It is a great privilege and honor to serve the people of the 35th Legislative District. As you are probably aware, I don't always believe in voting along party lines. However, I do believe I was elected to represent your interests in Olympia and I work diligently with both sides of the aisle to come up with solutions to our most challenging problems.

We recently completed our short legislative session. As I do at the end of every session (this was my 16th in Olympia), I've included a short description of some of this year's major pieces of legislation.

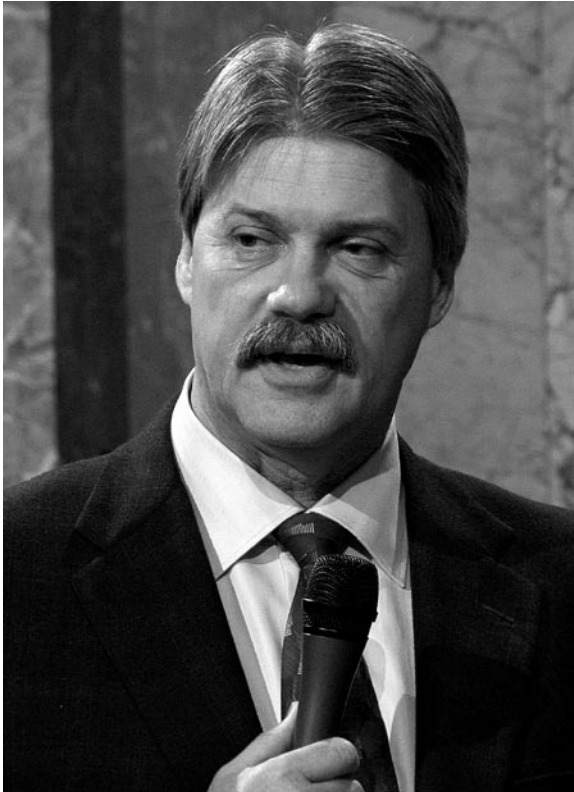
The Senate took 669 recorded votes in 2006. I was present for 668 of these votes. Only two other senators had a better attendance record.

Representing you in Olympia is truly an honor. As always, I welcome your comments and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Tim Sheldon
State Senator, 35th Legislative District

Here's my voting record on the major



Sen. Tim Sheldon speaks on the floor of the Senate

Supplemental operating budget (SB 6386)



I voted NO

This is the largest supplemental budget in state history. Usually, supplemental budgets make minor revisions such as adding funds for forest fires or other natural disasters. This supplemental budget was a complete re-write of the 2005 budget, adding \$627 million in new spending and creating jobs for 816 new state employees.

Increasing Initiative 601 (I-601) spending limits (SB 6896)



I voted NO

The bill allowed the Legislature to exceed by \$1.6 billion the state spending limits enacted by the voters with Initiative 601 in 1993. The bill passed the Senate with a vote of 25-22, authorizing a 17.4 percent increase in spending over the last biennial budget.

A Snohomish County judge has just ruled that manipulating the budget to bypass a vote of the people for huge spending increases violates I-601. Stay tuned.

Crackdown on sex offenders (multiple bills)



I voted YES

The Legislature passed 18 bills toughening penalties for sex offenders who prey on children, possess child pornography or refuse to register. Some offenders will now be imprisoned for a minimum of 25 years. This is a serious problem facing our communities and I was adamant in making our state one of the leaders in fighting back for victims, especially children.

Reforming unemployment insurance (SB 6885)



I voted YES

This bill supported by both business and labor gives construction and other seasonal workers more benefits.

Stadium bills

Neither the NASCAR bill nor the \$200 million Seattle Sonics bailout came up for a vote. I oppose public funding for professional sport franchises. The Sonics have threatened to move the team elsewhere if the Legislature doesn't respond favorably.

Capital budget - \$280 million construction budget (SB 6384)



I voted YES

The bill included bonds for environmental cleanup, 180 new prison beds, water projects, low-income housing and \$5.9 million for wastewater improvements at state parks, including Belfair, Potlatch and Twanoh.



issues of the 2006 session:

Harsher sentences for drunk drivers
(HB 3317)



I voted YES

Repeat driving-under-the-influence (DUI) offenders will be charged under felony statutes that impose longer sentences, keeping drunk drivers off the roads and protecting innocent bystanders. Washington had been one of three states without a felony DUI law.

Repealing the state park day use fee
(HB 2416)



I voted YES

The bill was a top priority for me this session. Why tax our families to use state parks they've already paid for? Park visits dropped dramatically after the \$5 fee was established in 2003. It's wrong to require a fee to watch a sunset or enjoy a picnic in a state park.

Fighting methamphetamine (SB 6239)



I voted YES

Methamphetamine is a highly addictive and destructive drug that has ravaged our communities and rural areas. Some law enforcement officials believe that up to 90 percent of property crimes, such as burglaries and identify theft, are committed by meth addicts. A bill passed by the Legislature increases penalties for drug offenders, facilitates cleanup of contaminated properties and expands treatment options.



Senate honors Teacher of the Year Susan Bernard

Moving the date of the primary (SB 6236)



I voted NO

This bill moves the date of the primary from September to August, thereby extending the campaign season. Proponents of the bill said that moving the date would give overseas military personnel additional time to receive and mail back election ballots. I disagree. Local county auditors already do a phenomenal job of mailing ballots to voters on time, and the public doesn't need a longer election cycle. Many voters will be on vacation when the August primary ballot arrives by mail.

Mandates for on-site sewage systems
(HB 1458)



I voted NO

As a local elected official, I am deeply concerned about the legislative practice of approving feel-good legislation and passing the responsibility down to local government — without funding! Although this bill provides limited low-interest loans for septic upgrades for low-income residents, the funding is minimal. In a classic act of duplicity, the Legislature took back \$4.8 million of the \$8 million allocated in 2005 for Hood Canal sewers in Belfair to fund new programs. With 38 separate organizations involved in Hood Canal's water quality issues, the state must do a better job of coordination.

Stopping diploma mills (HB 2507)



I voted YES

This legislation cracks down on entities or persons that issue false academic credentials, or "diploma mills." This deceptive business is a nationwide problem. Washington law prohibits an institution of higher learning to operate without approval from the Higher Education Coordinating Board. It's now a class C felony to knowingly grant or award fake academic diplomas and degrees.

Thanks to our 2006 pages !

The legislative page program is a unique opportunity for students to learn about state government. Students between ages 14-16 are eligible to apply. For complete details about the page program, please visit our legislative Web site:

<http://www1.leg.wa.gov/Senate/Administration/PageProgram/senpageprogram.htm>

The following students served as Senate pages for Sen. Tim Sheldon during the 2006 legislative session:



Jesse Emde



Amanda Swantak



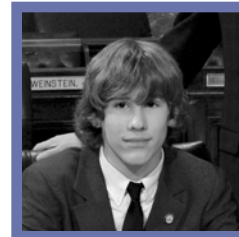
Michaela Ecklund



Christopher Trufner



Anna Bruce



Timothy Nelson